

REMARKS BEST AVAILABLE COPY

In the Office Action, the Examiner (1) allowed claims 1-15 and 22-40; (2) rejected claims 16-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; and (3) rejected claims 16, 20, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,614,909 to Komatsu et al ("Komatsu").

In this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 1, 10, 22, and 31, and cancel claims 4, 14, 16-21, 25, and 35 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof. Claims 1-3, 5-13, 15, 22-24, 26-34, and 36-40 are currently pending in this application.

The Examiner indicated in the Office Action that independent claims 1, 10, 22, and 31 were allowable. Amended independent claims 1, 10, 22, and 31 include the subject matter of their respective canceled dependent claims 4, 14, 25, and 35. Therefore, amended independent claims 1, 10, 22, and 31, and their respective dependent claims, are still allowable.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejection of claims 16-21 under § 112, second paragraph. Applicants cancel these claims to advance prosecution, but reserve the right to pursue those claims at a later date. Applicants also respectfully disagree with the rejection of claims 16, 20, and 21 under § 102(b) as anticipated by Komatsu. Applicants cancel these claims to advance prosecution, but may pursue those claims at a later date.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

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By: Kenneth M. Lesch
Kenneth M. Lesch
Reg. No. 44,868